

FISH CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES DUE TO MERCURY CONTAMINATION

(Revised February 2001)

New Mexico Department of Health
New Mexico Environment Department
New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

Because mercury has been found in some fish at concentrations that could lead to significant adverse human health effects, the following guidelines have been prepared. These guidelines allow those who fish, and their families, to make an informed decision as to what fish they can safely eat. The occasional consumer of fish from these waters is at little risk if they are otherwise in good health. However, ingestion of mercury at levels found in some of these fish, over a long period of time, could result in health problems such as kidney disease and/or eye, respiratory tract, nervous system, or brain damage. Fetuses, infants, and children are more sensitive than adults are to effects of mercury exposure because their nervous systems are still developing.

These are only guidelines; currently, there are no legal restrictions on eating fish from lakes and streams in New Mexico due to contamination. There is no mercury-related health risk from activities such as camping, swimming, or boating in these waters. Handling fish will not result in exposure to dangerous mercury levels. The State continues to recommend fishing and camping at these waters as enjoyable forms of recreation. Additionally, the State continues to encourage eating non-contaminated fish as an important part of a healthy diet.

The tables below show water bodies and their fish consumption guidelines. We use size as a basis for classifying fish because size is closely related to age. Mercury accumulates in fish throughout their lifetimes, so **older (bigger) fish tend to have more mercury in their bodies**. After catching a fish, measure it from the tip of its nose to the end of its tail. Then compare its length with the guideline to determine if it is safe for you or other members of your family to eat. Some sizes of some fish species listed in these guidelines are below the legal size limit as established by the New Mexico Game Commission. **These guidelines are for consumption only and do not supersede any regulations pertaining to size or bag limits.**

Waters that are not listed have not yet been tested. Fish species or sizes that are not listed have not been tested. These guidelines are for mercury contamination only. In the absence of specific information, use guidelines from the nearest location. If the fish you catch is not listed, use guidelines for the most similar species that is listed. "Black bass" means largemouth, smallmouth, or spotted bass; "crappie" means black or white crappie.

If you have any questions about these guidelines, call the New Mexico Environment Department, Surface Water Quality Bureau at (505) 827-2470 or toll free at 1-866-885-2997. If you have questions about medical concerns related to mercury ingestion, call the New Mexico Health Department, Office of Epidemiology at (505) 827-0006. If you have questions about fishing opportunities or regulations, call the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish at (505) 476-8000 or 1-800-862-9310.

GUIDELINES

(listed alphabetically by water body)

| Water body | Women who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or planning to be pregnant, and children under 18 years of age | General Public |
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| Abiquiu Reservoir | Do not eat brown trout (14 inches or longer), carp (17 inches or longer), channel catfish (any size), kokanee salmon (18 inches or longer), river carpsucker (19 inches or longer), or white crappie (any size). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. | Do not eat carp (longer than 29 inches) or channel catfish (longer than 16 inches). No more than one meal a month of carp (23 to 29 inches) or channel catfish (12 to 16 inches). No more than two meals a month of carp (17 to 23 inches), channel catfish (up to 12 inches), or white crappie (up to 8 inches). |
| Avalon Lake | Do not eat channel catfish (19 inches or longer) and no more than one meal a month (up to 19 inches). | No more than two meals a month of channel catfish (19 inches or longer). |
| Bear Canyon Reservoir | Do not eat bluegill (7 inches or longer), channel catfish (14 inches or longer), largemouth bass (14 inches or longer), or white crappie (7 inches or longer). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. | Do not eat bluegill (longer than 9 inches), largemouth bass (longer than 18 inches), or white crappie (longer than 9 inches). No more than one meal a month of bluegill (8 to 9 inches), largemouth bass (16 to 18 inches), or white crappie (8 to 9 inches). No more than two meals a month of bluegill (7 to 8 inches), largemouth bass (14 to 16 inches), or white crappie (7 to 8 inches). |
| Bluewater Reservoir | No restrictions on rainbow trout. | No restrictions on rainbow trout. |
| Brantley Reservoir | Do not eat bluegill (10 inches or longer), channel catfish (20 inches or longer), largemouth bass (15 inches or longer), walleye (15 inches or longer), or white bass (12 inches or longer). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. | Do not eat largemouth bass (longer than 21 inches) or white bass (longer than 14 inches). No more than one meal a month of largemouth bass (18 to 21 inches), or white bass (13 to 14 inches). No more than two meals a month of bluegill (longer than 10 inches), channel catfish (20 to 24 inches), largemouth bass (15 to 18 inches), walleye (15 inches or longer), or white bass (12 to 13 inches). |
| Caballo Reservoir | Do not eat channel catfish (28 inches or longer), largemouth bass (12 inches or longer), walleye (17 inches or longer), white bass (13 inches or longer), or white crappie (12 inches or longer). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. | Do not eat channel catfish (longer than 43 inches), walleye (longer than 28 inches), or white bass (longer than 17 inches). No more than one meal a month of channel catfish (35 to 43 inches), walleye (23 to 28 inches), or white bass (15 to 17 inches). No more than two meals a month of channel catfish (28 to 35 inches), largemouth bass (longer than 12 inches), walleye (17 to 23 inches), white bass (13 to 15 inches), or white crappie (longer than 12 inches). |
| Cabresto Lake | No restrictions on brook trout or cutthroat-rainbow hybrid ("cutbow") trout. | No restrictions on brook trout or cutthroat-rainbow hybrid ("cutbow") trout. |
| Canjilon Lakes | No restrictions on brook trout or rainbow trout. | No restrictions on brook trout or rainbow trout. |

| Water body | Women who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or planning to be pregnant, and children under 18 years of age | General Public |
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| Carlsbad Municipal Lake | Do not eat largemouth bass (17 inches or longer) and no more than one meal a month (up to 17 inches). | Do not eat largemouth bass (longer than 24 inches). No more than one meal a month of largemouth bass (20 to 24 inches), or two meals a month (17 to 20 inches). |
| Charette Lakes | Do not eat black bullhead (any size), white sucker (21 inches or longer), or yellow perch (any size). No more than one meal a month of white sucker (up to 21 inches). No restrictions on rainbow trout. | Do not eat yellow perch (longer than 13 inches). No more than one meal a month of black bullhead (10 inches or longer) or yellow perch (10 to 13 inches). No more than two meals a month of black bullhead (up to 10 inches), white sucker (21 inches or longer), or yellow perch (up to 10 inches). No restrictions on rainbow trout. |
| Clayton Lake | Do not eat bluegill (8 inches or longer), channel catfish (27 inches or longer), or walleye (any size). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. | Do not eat walleye (longer than 28 inches). No more than one meal a month of channel catfish (longer than 30 inches) or walleye (24 to 28 inches). No more than two meals a month of bluegill (longer than 8 inches), channel catfish (27 to 30 inches), or walleye (up to 24 inches). |
| Cochiti Reservoir | Do not eat black crappie (8 inches or longer), channel catfish (13 inches or longer), or walleye (any size). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. | Do not eat channel catfish (longer than 26 inches) or walleye (any size). No more than one meal a month of channel catfish (19 to 26 inches). No more than two meals a month of black crappie (8 inches or longer) or channel catfish (13 to 19 inches). |
| Conchas Reservoir | Do not eat black bass (14 inches or longer), channel catfish (20 inches or longer), crappie (12 inches or longer), or walleye (16 inches or longer). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. | Do not eat black bass (longer than 18 inches) or walleye (longer than 21 inches). No more than one meal a month of black bass (16 to 18 inches) or walleye (18 to 21 inches). No more than two meals a month of black bass (14 to 16 inches), channel catfish (20 inches or longer), crappie (12 inches or longer), or walleye (16 to 18 inches). |
| Eagle Nest Lake | Do not eat rainbow trout (22 inches or longer) or white sucker (14 inches or longer). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. No restrictions on cutthroat trout or kokanee salmon. | No more than two meals a month of rainbow trout (22 inches or longer) or white sucker (14 inches or longer). No restrictions on cutthroat trout or kokanee salmon. |
| El Vado Reservoir | Do not eat brown trout (18 inches or longer) or white sucker (15 inches or longer). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length and kokanee salmon (all sizes). No restrictions on rainbow trout. | Do not eat white sucker (longer than 20 inches). No more than one meal a month of white sucker (17 to 20 inches). No more than two meals a month white sucker (15 to 17 inches). No restrictions on rainbow trout. |

| Water body | Women who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or planning to be pregnant, and children under 18 years of age | General Public |
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| Elephant Butte Reservoir | Do not eat largemouth bass (9 inches or longer) or white bass (9 inches or longer). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. | Do not eat largemouth bass (longer than 23 inches) or white bass (longer than 23 inches). No more than one meal a month of largemouth bass (17 to 23 inches) or white bass (17 to 23 inches). No more than two meals a month of largemouth bass (9 to 17 inches) or white bass (9 to 17 inches). |
| Fawn Lakes | No restrictions on trout (all species) or white sucker. | No restrictions on trout (all species) or white sucker. |
| Heron Lake | Do not eat kokanee salmon (32 inches or longer), lake trout (42 inches or longer), or white sucker (14 inches or longer). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. | Do not eat white sucker (longer than 17 inches). No more than one meal a month of white sucker (16 to 17 inches). No more than two meals a month of kokanee salmon (32 inches or longer), lake trout (42 inches or longer), or white sucker (14 to 16 inches). |
| Lake Farmington (Beeline Lake) | Do not eat channel catfish (13 inches or longer) or largemouth bass (12 inches or longer). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. | No more than two meals a month of channel catfish (13 inches or longer) or largemouth bass (12 inches or longer). |
| Lake Maloya | Do not eat white sucker (17 inches or longer). No more than one meal a month of white sucker (up to 17 inches). No restrictions on rainbow trout. | No more than two meals a month of white sucker (17 inches or longer). No restrictions on rainbow trout. |
| Maxwell Lakes | No restrictions on channel catfish or rainbow trout. | No restrictions on channel catfish or rainbow trout. |
| McAllister Lake | No restrictions on rainbow trout or white sucker. | No restrictions on rainbow trout or white sucker. |
| McGaffey Lake | No restrictions on green sunfish or rainbow trout. | No restrictions on green sunfish or rainbow trout. |
| Navajo Reservoir | Do not eat black bass (13 inches or longer), bluegill (11 inches or longer), carp (26 inches or longer), channel catfish (24 inches or longer), crappie (11 inches or longer), northern pike (31 inches or longer), or any trout species (20 inches or longer). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. | Do not eat black bass (longer than 17 inches) or northern pike (longer than 50 inches). No more than one meal a month of black bass (16 to 17 inches), channel catfish (longer than 38 inches), or northern pike (41 to 50 inches). No more than two meals a month of black bass (13 to 16 inches), bluegill (longer than 11 inches), carp (longer than 26 inches), channel catfish (24 to 38 inches), crappie (longer than 11 inches), northern pike (31 to 41 inches), or any trout species (longer than 20 inches). |
| Pecos River (above Pecos) | No restrictions on brown trout. | No restrictions on brown trout. |
| San Juan River ("Quality Waters") | No restrictions on rainbow trout. | No restrictions on rainbow trout |

| Water body | Women who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or planning to be pregnant, and children under 18 years of age | General Public |
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| San Juan River (Hammond diversion to Hogback) | Do not eat carp (24 inches or longer) or channel catfish (31 inches or longer). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. | No more than one meal a month of channel catfish (longer than 41 inches). No more than two meals a month of carp (longer than 24 inches) or channel catfish (31 to 41 inches). |
| San Juan River (Hogback to Cudei) | Do not eat carp (24 inches or longer) or channel catfish (22 inches or longer). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. | No more than two meals a month of carp (longer than 24 inches) or channel catfish (longer than 22 inches). |
| San Juan River (Cudei to Mancos River confluence) | Do not eat carp (24 inches or longer) or channel catfish (29 inches or longer). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. | No more than one meal a month of channel catfish (longer than 37 inches). No more than two meals a month of carp (longer than 24 inches) or channel catfish (29 to 37 inches). |
| Santa Rosa Reservoir | Do not eat bass (8 inches or longer), bluegill (10 inches or longer), bullhead catfish (10 inches or longer), carp (16 inches or longer), carpsucker (20 inches or longer), channel catfish (14 inches or longer), or walleye (any size). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. | Do not eat black bass (longer than 16 inches), carp (longer than 23 inches), channel catfish (longer than 22 inches), or walleye (longer than 16 inches). No more than one meal a month of black bass (13 to 16 inches), carp (19 to 23 inches), channel catfish (18 to 22 inches), or walleye (13 to 16 inches). No more than two meals a month of black bass (8 to 13 inches), bluegill (longer than 10 inches), bullhead catfish (longer than 10 inches), carp (16 to 19 inches), carpsucker (longer than 20 inches), channel catfish (14 to 18 inches), or walleye (up to 13 inches). |
| Shuree Pond (upper) | No restrictions on rainbow trout. | No restrictions on rainbow trout. |
| Springer Lake | Do not eat black bullhead (9 inches or longer), channel catfish (20 inches or longer), largemouth bass (9 inches or longer), northern pike (41 inches or longer), or yellow perch (16 inches or longer). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. No restrictions on carp. | Do not eat channel catfish (longer than 29 inches). No more than one meal a month of channel catfish (25 to 29 inches). No more than two meals a month of black bullhead (longer than 9 inches), channel catfish (20 to 25 inches), largemouth bass (longer than 9 inches), northern pike (longer than 41 inches), or yellow perch (longer than 16 inches). No restrictions on carp. |
| Storrie Lake | Do not eat channel catfish (26 inches or longer), rainbow trout (29 inches or longer), or white crappie (11 inches or longer). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length or white sucker of any size. | Do not eat channel catfish (longer than 45 inches) or rainbow trout (longer than 46 inches). No more than one meal a month of channel catfish (35 to 45 inches) or rainbow trout (37 to 46 inches). No more than two meals a month of channel catfish (26 to 35 inches), rainbow trout (29 to 37 inches), or white crappie (longer than 11 inches). |

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| Stubblefield Reservoir | Do not eat black bullhead (19 inches or longer), channel catfish (24 inches or longer), walleye (any size), or white sucker (18 inches or longer). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. | Do not eat walleye (longer than 25 inches). No more than one meal a month of walleye (22 to 25 inches). No more than two meals a month of black bullhead (longer than 19 inches), channel catfish (longer than 24 inches), walleye (up to 22 inches), or white sucker (longer than 18 inches). |
| Sumner Reservoir | Do not eat black bass (10 inches or longer), channel catfish (14 inches or longer), or walleye (any size). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. | Do not eat black bass (longer than 13 inches), channel catfish (longer than 23 inches), or walleye (longer than 13 inches). No more than one meal a month of black bass (11 to 13 inches), channel catfish (19 to 23 inches), or walleye (7 to 13 inches). No more than two meals a month of black bass (10 to 11 inches), channel catfish (14 to 19 inches), or walleye (up to 7 inches). |
| Ute Reservoir | Do not eat black bass (7 inches or longer), bluegill (8 inches or longer), channel catfish (18 inches or longer), crappie (8 inches or longer), walleye (9 inches or longer), or white bass (10 inches or longer). No more than one meal a month of the above species that are shorter than the specified length. | Do not eat black bass (longer than 16 inches), bluegill (longer than 13 inches), channel catfish (longer than 21 inches), crappie (longer than 13 inches), walleye (longer than 14 inches), or white bass (longer than 13 inches). No more than one meal a month of black bass (13 to 16 inches), bluegill (11 to 13 inches), channel catfish (19 to 21 inches), crappie (11 to 13 inches), walleye (12 to 14 inches), or white bass (12 to 13 inches). No more than two meals a month of black bass (7 to 13 inches), bluegill (8 to 11 inches), channel catfish (18 to 19 inches), crappie (9 to 12 inches), walleye (9 to 12 inches), or white bass (10 to 12 inches). |